



Focus on Street Wastes Versus Vactor Waste

Vactor Wastes

The purpose of this publication is to explain the differences between “street wastes” and “Vactor wastes.” “Vactor” is a brand name for a vacuum truck that is capable of picking up many types of wastes. Currently, a wide variety of wastes are collected by Vactor trucks and treated as street wastes. However, not all wastes picked up by a Vactor truck qualify as street wastes.

To help clarify which wastes meet the definition of street wastes, the following information was copied from the Department of Ecology’s “*Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington: Volume IV -- Source Control BMPs*”, (publication #99-14) and expanded.

Background

In 1993, Ecology published a study titled “*Contaminants in Vactor Truck Wastes*.” This study was limited to street wastes, and found that they had a low probability of designating as dangerous wastes. Therefore, Ecology does not require designation of these wastes provided they meet the following definition and generators follow all other best management practices (BMPs) outlined in the “[Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington](#).”

“Street Wastes” **include**:

- liquid and solid wastes collected during maintenance of stormwater catch basins, detention/retention ponds and ditches and similar stormwater treatment, and conveyance structures; and
- solid wastes collected during street and parking lot sweeping.

“Street Wastes” as defined here, **do not include**:

- solids and liquids from street washing using detergents;
- cleaning of electrical vaults;
- vehicle wash sediment traps;
- restaurant grease traps;
- industrial process waste;
- sanitary sewage;
- mixed process, or combined sewage; or
- stormwater wastes.

Street Waste Management

Wastes from oil/water separators are not included as street wastes. Street wastes also do not include flood debris, landslide debris, chip-seal gravel, and process waste waters from operating facilities such as car washes.

“Street wastes,” as defined on the previous page, do not ordinarily classify as dangerous wastes. The owner of the stormwater facility and/or collector of “street waste” is considered the waste generator and is responsible for determining whether or not the waste designates as dangerous or hazardous. Sampling to date has shown that material from routine maintenance of streets and stormwater facilities does not classify as dangerous waste. However, it is possible that street waste from spill sites could. Street waste from areas with exceptionally high average daily traffic counts may contain contaminants – such as heavy metals, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), and carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (c-PAH) – at levels that limit reuse options. If there is any question whether or not the street wastes could designate, it must undergo the designation process as defined in the Washington’s *Dangerous Waste Regulations* (WAC 173-303-070). All other wastes picked up by Vactor trucks such as wastes from car washes and other industrial processes are not street wastes but are solid wastes subject to designation.

If you have further questions about the definition of street wastes and whether your wastes meet this definition, please contact your local Ecology regional office.

For More Information

Call your nearest regional office:



If you have special formatting needs for this publication, call (voice) 360-407-6759 (voice) or 711 or 800-833-6388 (TTY).

